

COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant Tourism Guidelines

Statement of Purpose

Franklin County is soliciting proposals from eligible tourism entities in the County that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis and community response.

Recommendations for funding will be made to the Franklin County Commissioners based on criteria set forth within state and federal regulations.

Background

Section 5001 of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (March 27, 2020) establishes the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Funding can be used for expenditures that:

1. are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
2. were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020; and
3. were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020.

Pennsylvania Act 24 of 2020 provides CARES Act funding to many counties, including Franklin County, through the COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development. It is through this grant program that eligible tourism entities can apply for funding.

Program Eligibility

- Tourism organizations located in Franklin County are eligible to apply for this funding.
- Applicants must currently be operating or have a clear plan to re-open once the Commonwealth permits partial or full re-opening.
- Applicants must have been operating on or prior to May 1, 2019. Eligible applicants must operate in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, must file a Pennsylvania tax return and will be required to submit their most recent tax return or IRS 990 form (if applicable). If the main office of an applicant is located in another county, only those costs associated with the services provided exclusively in Franklin County are eligible. Documentation will be required as part of the application process for verification purposes.
- Applicants cannot receive other COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant funding.

Priority Considerations

- Priority will be given to tourism organizations that did not receive any additional government COVID-19 response funding, for example: SBA Payroll Protection Program, other SBA Disaster/Emergency Funds.

Eligible Use of Funds:

- Eligible uses for COVID-19 expenses as defined by CARES Act include, but are not limited to:
 - working capital
 - utilities
 - special materials and equipment to comply with state requirements.
- Eligible expenditure examples (not limited to):
 - Operating Expenses (such as):
 - Rent, mortgage interest, bills, cable, internet, phone, spoilage, PPE purchases, cleaning supplies,
 - Any cost associated with preparing the agency to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus
 - Working capital for the purpose of covering the costs of re-opening operations after being fully or partially closed due to the state-mandated closure period commencing March 2020, as long as the expense was incurred due to COVID-19.
 - Any expenses (costs) incurred related to the expense of mitigating the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to specialized equipment, barriers, PPE's, and employee training expense to ensure compliance with state and federal CDC guidelines for reopening.
 - Any Covid-19 related expenses **not already paid** for with other relief measures such as state grants or loans, US SBA Paycheck Protection Program loans, local or regional grant and/or loan programs
- Applicants will be required to self-certify adherence to the following:
 - If you use grant funds for unauthorized purposes, the PA DCED will direct you to repay those amounts. If you knowingly use the funds for unauthorized purposes, you will be subject to additional liability such as charges for fraud. If one of your shareholders, members, or partners uses grant funds for unauthorized purposes, DCED will have recourse against the shareholder, member, or partner for the unauthorized use.

Ineligible Use of Funds:

- Lost revenue due to cancelled fundraising activities because of COVID-19 are not eligible expenses.

Please note that this list of eligible and ineligible activities is not all-inclusive. The grant review team will review each application and any supporting documentation to determine eligibility.

Ineligible Tourism Entities

- Tourism entities that do not have a physical location in Franklin County, Pennsylvania.
- Tourism entities with taxes or fees owed to the federal government or Commonwealth.
- Tourism entities engaged in any activity that is illegal under federal, state, or local law.
- Tourism entities that spend more than 51% of their budgeted expenses engaged in political or lobbying activities.

The application can be found at www.franklincountypa.gov .

Questions? Contact Glenda Helman, Director of Grants Management, Franklin County at gshelman@franklincountypa.gov or 717-709-7218.